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## SEXUAL ABSTINENCE AND MASTURBATION.


BY DR. FRITZ WITTELS.


ABSTINENCE before marriage is maintained either with the aid of masturbation, or without it. The former eventuality is never mentioned, for it might hurt the propaganda for continence. As in the overwhelming majority of cases continence is accompanied by masturbation (which makes the venerophobiacs of to-day and the anchorites of the Arabian desert kin) the case for continence is not accurately stated when we neglect to mention masturbation. A limit is set for normal sexual gratification by certain physical conditions. The possibility of overindulging and the habit of overindulging, however, are what makes masturbation dangerous.

Whether it is excess or mere indulgence in that practice which brings forth the various disorders consequent upon masturbation, such as apathy, headaches, stomach troubles, neurasthenia and melancholia is a purely medical question. Self gratification, however, has a deep sociological import. Other voluptuaries give something of themselves; the masturbator is a sexual egoist; he reverses the Biblical saying and proclaims that it is good for man to be alone. This, however, would only be a slim charge to bring against the onanist. Nature cares little about a few drops being spilled out of her melting pot and she straightens out deviations from the norm without giving a thought to ethical principles. It seems, however, as tho onanism and misanthropy were two inseparable things. Whosoever can enjoy sexual pleasures without the participation of another human being withdraws into his shell like a clam. Even Jupiter came down from his throne when he went lovemaking. He was a kind god. Masturbation destroys kindness as surely as love brings it out. The worst of

tyrants is the masturbator who cannot even be mollified by a woman's influence. He is the super-miser.

What it behooves us to fight is not so much onanism itself which is a personal matter and nobody else's business, but the point of view of the onanist, his abstinence from woman. At the first awakening of the sexual urge all men masturbate. Women are hard to secure and young men are bashful. Then some of them secure mates as they conquer the worlds and the weak ones are left out in the cold. Burning with envy and hatred these call morality to their help. They for one thing expect to be rewarded in an after life for their purity; and then they escape venereal disease. But syphilis is not the most terrible of life's dangers; it is only the most obvious. For love has made men suffer more than syphilis has. Whoever loves a woman will suffer thru her.

There is a vital difference, however, between the man who for fear of venereal infection gives up love's pleasures and the mere masturbator who, too weak for the trials of love, abstains from sexual intercourse. For what help could one expect from such a man in the fight against diseases which cannot infect him, which he may even consider sneeringly as meet retribution for normal indulgence?

We shall not cavil about the question as to whether there are, besides young children and old men, continent people who do not masturbate. The masturbator, however, is also mentally abstinent. The natural ardor which finds no outlet in masturbation must be deflected into some other channels and when it reaches its climax it becomes fanaticism. And then there arises, according to the man's temperament or power, either a harmless stamp collector or a Torquemada.

Partisans of prematrimonial continence recommend the practice of sports as a derivative. This may hold good in bourgeois circles, but what of the thousands who are being treated in free clinics for venereal diseases, altho in factories or mines they work themselves to death? Sports may be helpful to those who wear out the carpets in the reception rooms of physicians, for bureaucrats and for idlers. An athlete dead-tired after a period of training, a cavalry officer who has exhausted ten mounts, fall into bed and do not think of woman. In fact they think of nothing whatsoever, they become stupid animals and nobody will eulogize football champions as the ornament of the human race.

People with a regular occupation can only indulge moderately in physical exercise, taking a trip on Sundays, playing tennis or skating after hours; those diversions simply serve to cheer up men and women who keep their eyes open and enjoy each other's company. In fact sports in which men and women take part are the nicest little matchmakers. [Wittels says: panderers.] On the other hand, athletic clubs returning to their home town, or soldiers on a furlough do not shine by their continence. The anchorites leading solitary lives in the desert never even thought of seeking in physical exercise a protection against sinful desires. They found in fasting, waking and flagellation better means of lowering their vitality and consequently their sexuality. Those who are today warring on syphilis can hardly recommend such practices; they seek not to lower people's vitality, but to hold the sex urge within bonds. The problem is complex. Real men must have love. Youth can do just as little without love as without food and drink. And Venus smiles upon sport, for physical exercise makes men strong. Sport does not foster continence; it is too healthful for that.

Besides, the chastity movement is likely to work a great hardship upon the women, for if the men go in for continence, the women have no hope of ever escaping the slavery of sex. The women have now and then demanded that men remain chaste until marriage, but that demand was never very loud, nor did it find much echo. It is to the women's interest that the men live their life normally: for the chaste man is unable to understand woman; he either idealizes her or reviles her, because he does not know her.

In women continence brings forth many evils. It drives them to seek masculine occupations, makes terrorists out of them and hysterics. This is their first revenge. To be shot by a hysterical woman is not so bad; to be slowly plagued to death by her is worse. And, now, behold the fear of syphilis calling into being a masculine form of hysteria! Abstinence cranks will not do away with syphilis; but thanks to them specialists in nervous diseases and psychiatrists will have their hands full. And then women coveted of no man avenge themselves—revenge number second—by growing ugly. [Which Wittles says should not worry us overmuch, but which does worry the Editor a good deal. It is a pity to see nice girls turning into sour angular old maids.]

Very fortunately Nature bothers very little about ethics and eugenics; one spring day will kill off more ethical principles than

all the wiseacres could manufacture in a whole year. The chaste are and will ever be a dwindling minority. One of the dangers of the chastity movement, however, is that it may find a fertile soil in ground already tilled by the pious. Then we will have official continence and secret lovemaking; and secret diseases will become more secret than ever and the official world will have no sympathy for the unlucky ones. The chastity movement will have only one result: to increase our hypocrisy, and the spread of venereal diseases.

If we could only admit openly and frankly that we all go lovemaking before and after marriage, if it was really shameful not to have a mistress, society would care for the victims of love and honor them as we honor the warrior wounded on the battle field. [Phew!] If love before marriage is shameful, venereal diseases are also shameful and the infected ones are despicable. How illogical those are who in their desire to kill off syphilis demand the registration of every case and yet preach continence! The patients would fear the physician likely to report them more than they would syphilis; they would allow themselves to be eaten up by the disease rather than to brave the public shame that would make life impossible for them in bourgeois circles. Without registration of cases and compulsory treatment we will never stamp out syphilis; before we can introduce such necessary measures, however, we must conduct a campaign of education. Instead of preaching continence we must teach the powerful influence of love, the value of caresses and the dangers of asceticism. Then a syphilis bill providing for registration of cases could be introduced. Under the present conditions, however, to treat syphilis as an ordinary epidemic disease would present many dangers. Society catches the diseases it deserves and cannot be cured by statutes.

The sexual urge is not merely what the preachers of continence represent it, a phenomen of the lower abdominal regions. The physician who prescribes abstinence as a preventive of venereal disease just as he would prescribe boiled water as a preventive of cholera, puts the sexual instinct on a par with alcohol and tobacco, abstinence from which is not detrimental but rather beneficial to body and mind.

That spirit has created some of the worst horrors of our times, the terrible situation the girl mother, the illegitimate child and the prostitute find themselves in. The penal code takes no notice

of extramatrimonial relations and, therefore, the self-righteous welcome pregnancy and infection as adjuncts to the penal code. But he who escapes both is simply like the thief who has not been caught.

As far as prostitution is concerned it is only the idiot who will insult the prostitute. Love is woman's currency. She repays with love whatever is offered her, be it cash money or her upkeep for life in the form of marriage. As long as marriage exists the prostitute will be despised because she is too cheap. Women hate prostitutes because they underbid them and the men scorn them because the supply of them is too large and their price too low. In our society built upon marriage there is nothing to be done to help the prostitute. She is the female proletarian. We can measure the humane feelings of our modern society from the fact that it puts the prostitute on the same level with the born criminal. And why? Probably because she lives from the continuous breakdown of the continence theory. The only way to reclaim the prostitute is to erect anew the altar of Venus and to declare it honorable to worship her in any form whatsoever. Then woman will have a personality of her own and no longer be something lower than an animal. For it would be better to be a dog than a human being which another human being embraces with disgust.

We reach then the conclusion that abstinence produces a disgruntled self-centered type of fanatic and crank. It increases neurasthenia and robs youth of the only means to forget the emptiness of life. It militates against woman gaining her sexual freedom, damns the girl mother and her child and lowers the prostitute below the level of human dignity. It develops unhealthy instincts in woman, and drives her into the masculine professions. The woman's beauty and personality which thrive on man's desire are thwarted by it. Considering the force of the sexual urge, continence can only be fostered in a small measure. Therefore the puritanical spirit only increases hypocrisy, impedes the fight on sexual disease and promotes the spread of syphilis and gonorrhea.

I hear the continence cranks howling: "How can anyone say that we minimize the importance of love when we bespeak love unto death for the first and only bride?" They advise people to marry young. It has been proved, however, that marriage does not constitute a safe protection against venereal diseases.

Out of a hundred cases of infection treated in free clinics 20 patients had been infected after marriage and many specialists con-

tend that the proportion of venereal cases is still higher among the well to do. Continence cranks may well retort that marriage with side escapades is not what they preach but this type of marriage is what we must reckon with in real life. The traveling man is unfaithful out of want, the sedentary man out of surfeit.

As long as the proportion of disease does not reach 50 percent marriage can be considered a protection, altho not an absolute one, against venereal infection. And then why wax so enthusiastic over a protection which is only relative? Why not rather point out to young people the misery of poor families in which a child is born every year? A father is merely a provider. Character building, pursuit of a career come after that. That does not chime in with the popular adage: Early marriage, long happiness.

As far as love itself is concerned, let's cast a retrospective glance upon the nations where the family was held most highly, the ancient Romans, Germans and Jews. They married young and adultery was almost unknown. But we also are told that the mates didn't even know each other before marriage. We may then assume that the matchmaker plays a great rôle when people marry young. Love comes later. This is spoken in all earnestness. A healthy young fellow who has never loved will love any woman that comes his way: provided, some may say, that she is not unattractive; but at that age every woman is attractive. Let every man remember who his first love was and in almost every case it will turn out to have been a rather poor specimen of humanity. The matchmaker should not be dismissed contemptuously for he can at least forestall the worst.

We must estimate rightly the actual value of that first love. We assume that a young human being, ignorant of the world and shifting with every wind will settle rightly such an important question and turn into the right direction as infallibly as a magnet turns to iron even when it is concealed under non-metallic matter. Mates that found each other at an early age love each other and never repent for having married young, but this is not love at its highest. The first love is not love: it is an infantile disease one has to go thru. To judge the intensity of a love one should ask not how long it has lasted, but how many times the man had loved before. There is no doubt but Goethe had for Frau von Stein an affection which was, if not warmer, at least more conscient and more valuable than for the Gretchen he tells us about in Wahrheit und Dichtung. On his last love for Ulrica von Levetzow we shall

not pass any judgment. Old age and adolescence are alike; anything that is young attracts them.

The position taken by the continence cranks is indefensible even on sentimental grounds. It is life and love which build up personality in both sexes; men are moulded a little more by life, women a little more by love. The tender chick that has only taken one step in life, to pass from her parents' house into her husband's amounts to very little; she hasn't lived. Troubadours didn't marry young and when they married they never celebrated their own wife in their poems. Hearth and heart do not always get along so very well. Passion vanishes and what is left of it cannot soar high, at least not over the boredom of everyday life. Adipose comfort, ignoble contentment, bourgeois smugness, these are the pillars of society; but why mention love in the same breath?

With our point of view syphilis leads us around a vicious circle. Warnings to the young will do little besides creating a generation of neurasthenics worrying themselves to death. And then it is easy to give warnings, but we will not find it so easy to tell children that their sexual impulses are nothing to be ashamed of and should not be repressed. Are we to explain to our girls how they can ascertain whether a man has a purulent discharge? This mere suggestion makes us indignant. Our girls are decent girls. In decency they must go thru pregnancy and be milchcows, in decency they must bear their inflammation of the vagina, in decency they must rot alive. A day will come when we will consider it more important to impart that sort of information to the young than to teach them the history of literature.

And if some one asks me now what suggestion I have for saving mankind from infection and undesired conception, I shall say that as far as conception goes a stroke of the pen would remove that peril. As far as infection is concerned, it looks as tho men had never wanted to get rid of it. The measures adopted in times of epidemics, if applied to the whole world for several years, with the cooperation of every physician and of every government would stamp out syphilis for ever.

Before we can accomplish such a feat we must first become pagans. The hatred of venereal diseases will only become strong enough when the absolute necessity of caresses is recognized and the sacredness of love in any form has been embodied in a sort of religion. There is nothing unethical about loving a woman of the street. The only trouble is that nowadays her lover must be either a god or a pimp.

Syphilis is so completely bound up with what we call morality that we will never get rid of it until we get rid of our so-called morality. And then to some people their chastity ideal is more important than the fight against syphilis. We must then pin our faith to the Medical Profession. With the help of a vaccine they could save the moral concepts of to-day. But they would get little money for their research work. Who would dare to confess that he had himself vaccinated to escape the diseases consequent upon our present morality?

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## SEXUAL CAUSES OF DIVORCE.

BY GEH. JUSTIZRAT DR. HORCH, Mainz.

THE following remarks have as a basis my experience in some hundreds of divorce cases extending over thirty years practice as an attorney. Only from the standpoint of sexual science can we hope to understand the general laws back of all these special cases. It is true that most judges and attorneys do not regard this science with favor, in fact they speak of it with contempt and at best regard any discussion of it as bad taste. As a young attorney I was once defending a dangerous criminal and I tried to show that he presented the criteria of a defective in the sense of the then young Lombroso school and was not wholly responsible. The old judge warned the jury against letting themselves be influenced by the teachings of this firebrained Lamberini of whose work he was evidently completely ignorant. Things are but little better today. There are not lacking many judges who reply to the testimony of the psychiatrist "this man talks sensibly, how then can he be insane?" Similarly in sexology most jurists divide the most powerful of human impulses into merely "allowed or not allowed." But human fate really lies between these limits and only by a careful study can we hope to arrive at an understanding. However personal and subjective my remarks may seem, I offer them in the hope that they may add something to the understanding of this very difficult subject.

That sexuality is the prime factor in divorce needs no demonstration here. Tho marriages are often contracted for other reasons, social or financial, sex is still the fundamental relation

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* Archiv für Sexualforschung, I, 42, '15.

which determines the outcome for better or worse, and that regardless of age or physical characteristics. A young man may marry an old woman and while the sexual activity may be indeed limited it is never absent. And the same is true of those numerous unions of beautiful and ugly, handsome and deformed. Ideas of beauty are indeed various but the male impulse being the more active and compelling will fulfill itself even under the most unfavorable conditions. We meet daily, pregnant women of such exceeding ugliness that a normal man can not understand how it could happen. Yet so irresistible is the male desire that it does so act. The woman's role being the more passive an unsympathetic relation is the more readily tolerated. One clever writer has said that if the same physiological preliminaries were needed by woman that are required for the man, most marriages would never be consummated. Since no such preliminaries are needed by her, woman's sexual activity seems to be unlimited even toward the most disgusting of men. Even where the marriage to such a man shows all the ear marks of legalized prostitution she seems to have no great difficulty in fulfilling her function in this regard.

But these particular phenomena fade into insignificance in comparison with the effect of sexuality upon the quarrels which lead to the breaking down of the marriage relation. If this cause is not at first sight apparent it is because divorce cases are handled in a routine procedure. Our laws allow as grounds for divorce: adultery, incest, unnatural practices, attempted murder, desertion and insanity with certain limitations, and "if the defendant has so injured the marriage obligations, or has by such immoral or dishonorable conduct destroyed the relation that the plaintiff can not be encouraged to continue in it." This it usually expresses as extreme cruelty and inhuman treatment. Certain limitations of a further paragraph of the law greatly restrict the action of this clause. It is urgently to be desired that the old Prussian right to divorce for incompatibility and the civil right on grounds of mutual consent be again legalized. An unprejudiced observer will admit that unhappy marriage not only injures the parents, but has even a greater evil, effect upon the bringing up of the children. This becomes the more evident where the children become divided in their allegience and take sides in the constant family quarrels. I have frequently observed that where a divorce was secured the children fared immensely better.

As long as the grounds for divorce remain so purely formal

we can not hope for much enlightenment in the matter of the real causes. At present all that is required is a few witnesses who can testify that an adultery was committed, or that gross brutality be shown and the wheels go round and one party is adjudged to be to blame. The evidence which might show the real cause and the real blame is never before the court. In most cases both parties are to blame. Frequently a study of the real facts would show that the party who secured the divorce was really at fault.

For a complete elucidation of the blame the judge has not the evidence and I believe that a conscientious attorney to whom the plaintiff opens her heart would be better able to pass upon the question of responsibility. But most attorneys regard these cases as merely formal procedure and are content if enough evidence is available to secure a judgment. This attitude works injustice. A careful observer will soon be forced to the conclusion that an inequality of libido is the primary cause of practically all divorces. It is frequently asserted that the first estrangement occurred on the wedding night and is due to the brutality of the man, that his conduct could only be described as legalized rape. But this is only true of certain cases of men wholly lacking in refinement and sympathy. The same charge is raised however, in many cases where the man was both refined and considerate. In most cases of course, any incongruity of impulse is finally adjusted, but where this does not happen divorce is the usual result. There may be other causes asserted but back of them all lies this lack of equality of impulse.

The credible assertions of many clients leave no doubt in my mind that many women are sexually indifferent and remain so throughout marriage. They may fulfill their conjugal duties, but too often it is only a duty and where they develop a certain amount of excitement they yet never experience a need in the sense that a man does. Women who before marriage have developed a strong tendency to self-gratification respond with difficulty to the demands of their husbands and the husbands complain that the women continue this practice in marriage and even give it precedence over the normal relation. When such a woman marries a man sexually vigorous differences are sure to arise which penetrate into all parts of the home life. The man reproaches his wife with coldness and she him with undue insistence upon his desires which wounds her self-respect. In such cases the everlasting nagging set up makes a reconciliation difficult. Even worse is the case where the woman

is of the higher potency. In one case of mine the bride boxed the groom's ears on the wedding night because he did not gratify her as often as she felt entitled to.

The commonest cause of divorce—adultery—has as its origin this inequality of the impulse. The unsatisfied party seeks relief elsewhere for that which marriage has not brought. Usually the man's appetite for variety has been well developed before marriage and his opportunities are naturally greater and the risk of detection less. Without defending him in the least it is at least more easily understood why he so frequently goes astray. The civil code does not recognize the husband's adultery as ground for divorce unless it is consummated in the actual residence of the wife. Those who do not view life from the standpoint of a dogmatic morality have no doubt that the formal treatment of divorce cases according to our laws frequently lead to results which are far from edifying. Occasional missteps by the husband are not always sufficient to secure a divorce, yet in other cases a single adultery brings divorce and the penalizing of the husband even where the judge knows that the marriage had long since ceased to be genuine or whatever mitigating circumstances were present. Not infrequently those adjudged guilty are excellent husbands and fathers and can not at all understand why they should be singled out to bear the whole blame, when the real cause was the mismating. When Schopenhauer said that adultery on the husband's part was natural, because he could exercise his natural function at any time, while the woman could bear a child only once in nine months, he stated merely the superficial side of the question. Much more significant are the inner circumstances. One can safely say that misconduct on the wife's part strikes deeper into the relation than that of the husband and a return to the former condition of her home life is for her practically impossible.

We must not forget that in law adultery requires an actual union of the genitals. Such a fact is difficult to establish so that in practice most complaints are brought under that paragraph which refers to anything which can be summed up as indecencies. As long as this actual union of genitals can not be shown the law does not admit adultery no matter how great perversions may have been shown. In fact divorce can not be obtained for perversities on the husband's part, in comparison with which adultery would be respectable.

One of the commonest causes of adultery and divorce is the

practice of coitus interruptus. The desire to limit the number of children to the economic means or social convenience leads to this method of contraception which has the advantage that it requires no previous preparation or expense. In this connection we must regard the attempt to limit the sale of those articles which have this contraceptive function as not only abortive since such sale is negligible in comparison with the practice of coitus interruptus, but also as foolish and dangerous in so far as the same means are necessary for combatting venereal disease.

In talking with many women I have been struck by the fact that the married troubles first began after the birth of one or two children. Careful questioning soon brought out the fact that this was the time when coitus interruptus was first established as a regular habit. The effect of this practice on the nervous system of one or both of the partners is unmistakable. The watchfulness required to interrupt at the right time puts into play a large number of emotions which make impossible that feeling of complete detumesence which is necessary. More distressing is the case of the wife, who is usually left unsatisfied and who very probably then begins to seek in masturbation the complete gratification which was denied her. The physical irritation as well as the nervous distress forms a background for the whole of the married life and results in constantly increasing irritability which ultimately lands the unfortunates in the divorce court. At times, I have been able to restore the happiness of a threatened family by a suitable regulation of their sex life. In this same connection a recent court decision is of importance. It was adjudged that the refusal of the wife to allow coitus without the use of contraceptive measures should be held as grounds for granting a divorce. As a matter of fact the use of such measures to prevent divorce would seem of more importance than the encouragement of coitus interruptus.

With great frequency the sexuality expresses itself in perverse forms which give rise to the complaint. Such perversions as long as they are of a heterosexual kind are as common in marriage as coitus interruptus. Sooner or later every one of them is met with in practice. While such facts are communicated to the attorney [and the physician] they are seldom presented in court because they are not actionable in law. It is impossible to obtain witnesses to such misconduct and therefore such facts cannot be successfully put in evidence. Nevertheless they are common enough that marriage among other things may be regarded as the breeding ground

of this kind of perversity. Most frequent of all are cunnilingus and fellatio. These practices are very common in the less worthy marriages. Even if a good deal of hypocrisy is present at times in the wife's complaint and she is herself frequently quite as perverted as her husband, nevertheless one can but feel sorry for the physically delicate and refined woman who is forced to such loss of self-respect when the law does not allow her any relief whatever.

Twenty-five years ago cunnilingus was described as a perversion imported from France which had not then attacked the healthy body of our people. To-day it is widely practiced in all classes of society from the lowest to the highest. In one of my cases a young farmer's wife complained that her husband used this method exclusively, even stopping her in the midst of her daily work in order to gratify his lust. In another case the husband complained that his wife would allow no other form of gratification.

Sadism and masochism are also exceedingly common. Biting and scratching are the most usual forms, and in one of my cases the physicians discovered numberless tooth marks on the thighs of the wife where the husband had expressed his sadistic tendencies. Another sadist used to shave his wife's pubic hair and then have intercourse when the friction of the new growth caused her exceeding pain. I have also met many masochistic cases. One woman induced her husband to have relations with one of her friends in her presence which raised her to a pitch of highest excitement. In another case a spiritually eminent but wholly perverted man used to place his wife in situations where she had to receive advances from other men which proceedings he watched through a special peep hole in the door, afterwards gratifying himself. I believe the woman's assertion that the husband often tried to induce her to let other men use her while he looked on, but that she declined.

I have not met any case of bestiality in my own practice, but one is recorded in the Archivs für Kriminalanthropolgie where a man forced his wife to submit to this horrible perversion.

Less frequent than the heterosexual perversions are the homosexual variety, at least as factors in divorce. When a homosexual marries, the perversion remains and if it never becomes a public scandal it merely means that it remains buried in the bosom of the family. I cannot agree with those writers who assert that a homosexual marriage with a normal woman can be happy. I recall one

such case where ultimately the husband committed suicide but his wife assured me that their life was very unhappy. Still less frequently the homosexuality of the wife leads to divorce. Bisexuality in women is more easily overcome than in the case of men while her passivity in the sexual act makes it less a matter for complaint. I had one case where the wife submitted to her husband but obtained her own pleasure from cunnilingus which she practiced upon a woman friend.

In what has gone before I have tried to show some of the relations between sexuality and divorce. With one exception all of these cases are from my own practice though I have naturally picked out the more striking illustrations of the vagaries of this impulse. But if in one man's practice so many cases occur, how widely diffused must be the causes in question! Schiller spoke of that gigantic fate which if it raises a man up also destroys him, and shall not we say of love that it destroys man if it does not elevate him? We should not forget the great number of normal happy marriages where slight incongruities are adjusted with time to some kind of harmony. But for the rest, one part drifts into the divorce court, another is held together by social or financial reasons. With these we can hope for improvement only from a better training in discipline, more knowledge and increased culture. Even then the incongruities cannot be wholly avoided, nor can the perversions and degradations, but many cases of lifelong unhappiness could be avoided by a better understanding of the nature and possibilities of the sexual impulse. We should not forget that the recent unparalleled prosperity of our nation has bred luxuriousness and laziness. May the present great crisis clear the air and refresh us with those primitive virtues: self denial and self control.

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## SEXUAL ALTRUISM.

By B. S. Talmey, M.D.

THE line of demarcation between the physiological and pathological is nowhere less distinctly drawn than in the realm of sex. The borderland between the normal and abnormal in the sex-emotions is of a very wide extent. One of these emotions, occupying a position on the borderline, is sexual altruism.

In a general way, egotism and altruism, although supposedly standing upon the opposite poles of the compass, are yet closely related. There is always an egotistic trait behind every altruistic act. Egotism finds satisfaction in its own enjoyment, while altruism finds its gratification in contributing to the well-being of others. Both are in the last analysis concerned with the gratification of the ego. Both the miser and the generous aim at obtaining a positive "lust-effect." But while egotism has no concern for the others at all, the main concern of altruism is the happiness of the others. The contentment derived from a certain action is hence no criterion of altruism, but the degree of enjoyment derived from this action by others determines its altruistic or egotistic motive. When the other obtains the main pleasure or happiness from the action while the actor himself finds his gratification in seeing the other enjoying the fruit of the act, then such an act is altruistic in nature.

Erotic altruism hence does not mean lack of gratification altogether, but the source of the derived satisfaction must be the contribution to the libido of the other, while the actor himself remains more or less sexually indifferent. His own happiness is of a general nature, akin to the contentment of the philanthropist when contributing to the well-being of others. When the happiness of the actor is also of an erotic nature, then the act ceases to be altruistic.

The criterion between erotic altruism and egotism is hence the sexual libido or orgasm. The party which does not experience this libido and still participates in the sexual activity to please the other party and afford it erotic libido is actuated by altruistic considerations.*

Erotic altruism will mostly be found in the female, while absolute egotism is only possible in the male. In the erotism of the female there will always be found some altruistic trait. The physiology of sex requires from the female a certain degree of altruism in her normal sex-life. The male does not necessarily

* If A. and B. are playing a game of ball, and A. enjoys the game, his action is egotistic. B. who is not enjoying the game at all and only plays to please A. because without his participation the game would be impossible, is altruistic, no matter whether he finds some gratification in pleasing A. The enjoyment derived from the game itself is the criterion whether the action is altruistic or egoistic.

The sister of charity administering to the sick and poor also finds great contentment in her work and expects moreover some thing beyond, still her work is pure altruism.

need to have any consideration for the emotions of his partner. Her passivity brings it about that an indifferent, unexcited, unwilling, disgusted and even a hating female may participate in erotic activity. But the male, to effect union, needs for his erection the erotic excitement by the female. Without male excitation by the female there is no erection, and without erection there is no union. An indifferent, unexcited or unwilling male is an impossible partner. The male does not need an excited female, he needs only to think of himself, he can afford to be egoistic in his sex-life. The female has first to arouse the male desire, she must consider the state of his excitement. She can only experience erotic libido, when the male participates in the enjoyment. She can only taste by being tasted.

This condition is the basis of coyness and coquetry found in the females of all higher animals. The female, in the mating stage, asks and refuses at the same time. She simulates resistance. This coy resistance serves to increase the male voluptas, and his increased desire increases her libido. Coyness and coquetry have thus become sex-determiners, transmitted by heredity. Amorous sportiveness of advance and withdrawal, or erotic coquetry, is the natural instinct of the female throughout the animal kingdom, the human female included. Fleeing to invite pursuit is one of the feminine arts. The human female also consents while refusing. Woman plays with the man, coquets, trifles, allures and goads him. But in the woman, to the instinct of coquetry, is added the emotion of modesty, founded upon the law of obstacles (vide Talmey "Woman" 7th edition, p. 242). In this way her manoeuvres and designs of exciting the male become highly complicated.

To arouse male desire she must display her physical charms. But modesty forbids her the display of the very parts of her body which are erotically exciting and excitable. Modesty commands her to cover these parts, one way or other. Hence she has to take her refuge to the most subtle contrivances and artifices in dress and adornment. She has to display her person yet be covered. Her feminine nudity has to be veiled in a manner to intensify masculine desire. She bends all her energies upon the enhancement of her attractiveness by the cultivation of the physical charms which have a provocative effect upon the onlooker. She is highly solicitous over the luxuriance of her hair, fineness of her skin, rotundity and lines of her alluring bosom, thinness of her waist, smallness of her hands and feet. All these seductive lures

serve to evoke the male desire for her body and arouses his yearning for her. She attributes the highest importance to the increase of her physical beauty, to personal adornment, to the enhancement of her charms and to the display of her aphrodisiac lures through dress, finery and adornment. Her constant solicitation is the care of her body and the matter of her toilet. By these means she is capable of stimulating male desire for her and succeeds in provoking man's sexual powers. This aim may be hidden to her conscious ego. The intention to bring her charms into the contest for his favor may only dwell in her subconsciousness, still it is at the foundation of the cultivation of her physical and mental charms by means of which she wishes to draw the man to her.*

The constant solicitation for the cultivation of her own body results in creating in her a certain sexual superconsciousness, a certain kind of egoism. She becomes more egocentric than the male. When he meets with the female he unconsciously asks himself, is she attractive enough to excite me? and she asks the same question, am I attractive enough to excite him? Her physical attractiveness is of the greatest importance to both of them, his is of no consequence to either. Her ego is of first consideration, his of secondary importance. His sexual activity in life is only a small wheel in the economic machine, her activity is a mechanism in itself. When she succeeds in her activity to provoke man's desire for her, she experiences a degree of happiness second only to the real erotic libido. She considers his excitement a tacit homage paid to the irresistible nature of her charms.

The satisfaction of the woman in having erotically excited a man is hence a physiological trait of the normal woman. It is the contentment found in having finished successfully the preliminaries and having prepared the smooth pathway for the continuation of the drama. This secondary rudimentary satisfaction of the woman represents the normal "altruismus sexualis."

When the woman's psyche and fantasy find *complete* gratification in the preliminary activity, or in the erotic altruism, without giving any thought to the final act, then the emotion has crossed the borderline of the normal, she is moving within the confines of the pathological.

Erotic altruism is especially found in the relations of some

* The real reason for taking in food, the maintenance of metabolic equilibrium, is also hidden to the average man.

women with youthful persons, known under the name of puerisation. In this activity the woman experiences great satisfaction in sexually exciting boys. In the pronounced case of sexual altruism she will allow the boy all kinds of perverted practices on her, where she herself does not find any gratification in the practice itself, but in the conviction of having given him pleasure. If an emotion has reached such a degree, it has crossed the boundary line of the normal and has entered the realm of the abnormal.

The following histories are representative of pathological sexual altruism.

A young teacher returned home late in the evening and noticed through the open window of a boarding-house, on the opposite side of the street, a number of college students amusing themselves at a game of chess. As soon as she lit her room, she saw them hurrying to their window to observe her doings. This thing greatly amused her and she pulled the shade down only so far as to still allow her admirers to have a good look of what was going on in her room. She then began to undress and took an unusual long time in taking off every piece of apparel, giving the boys a chance to enjoy themselves. She especially took her time while doing up her hair dressed only in her night gown. The faces of her observers, eager to see every movement of hers, caused her to linger at her toilet considerably longer than usual. When she finally had enough of the game she did as if she had only just noticed them and, with simulated modesty, pulled down the shade entirely.

The following evening the light in the students' room went out as soon as hers was lighted, but she could see the boys looking through their dark window. Thereupon she repeated the same game as in the previous evening, offering to the boys' gaze even such intimate parts of her anatomy, as modesty would otherwise command her to hide. She then went to bed with the satisfaction of having contributed to the enjoyment and welfare of her fellowmen. This game went on for several months each evening until she got tired of the play and stopped abruptly.

At the first glance it would appear that the play of this young teacher was only a girlish prank. Every woman loves to test the influence of her charms upon men. But the normal woman, once she has tested this influence, will soon drop her admirer if she herself has no erotic interest in the game. Here the young woman continued her manoeuvers for months in order not to deprive the young students of their nightly pleasures. Moreover the normal

modest woman will never forget her modesty so far as to expose to the gaze of men those parts of her body which every woman is anxious to hide even in the presence of her female friends. Still a young, cultured, modest girl lays all her native modesty aside and plays the perverted antics of the exhibitionist, because forsooth she accidentally discovered that her charms afford erotic pleasure to a few young men she personally did not even know.

The following is the history of a true case of puerisation.

A young woman, mother of a baby of ten months, while dressing one afternoon to go to a moving picture show, hears a knock at her door. When she opened the same, just far enough to see who it was, she found it was her neighbor's eight year old boy who came to deliver a message from his mother. Although only partly dressed she let the child in into her flat. The child's startled look at the half dressed young woman, his sparkling eyes and flushed face made her guess what was going on within him and amused her greatly. Still she stimulated ignorance, took the boy on her lap and asked him for the cause of his excitement. The boy immediately began to caress her neck, shoulders and bosom. It was a regular show to see the boy amusing himself. So she did not go to the show on that afternoon. She had a show at her home.

The following afternoon the boy called again with the excuse of wishing to play with the baby. But instead of playing with the baby he put again his little arms around the mother's neck and began to caress and kiss her. The young woman could not see anything wrong in her actions. She was satisfied, by being able to give the boy pleasure without any trouble to herself. This play went on for several months until she moved away to another part of the city.

The remark of this young woman that she had a regular show in observing the pranks of the eight year old child clearly shows that the satisfaction she experienced was not of an erotic nature. The first afternoon she was only amused at seeing a child's erotic voluptas, excited by feminine charms. Her satisfaction was in no way different from the satisfaction she would have found if she had gone to the show. Later on she found gratification in being able to give the boy the pleasure he so greatly enjoyed. Her emotion was akin to that which any person may feel when he sees the happiness of a child over the box of candy he just

handed him. No erotic libido came into play in her case. She was happily married, loved her husband immensely, and worshipped her child. The least trace of libido would have been considered by her a betrayal of her husband and a humiliation to her child. As it was she gloried in the kindness of her heart. It was, therefore, a plain case of erotic altruism.

The following is even a more flagrant case of puerisation.

A young woman, mother of a little girl of two years, is spending the hot summer months with her friend in the country near a lake. One day she and the friend's little son of six years were bathing alone in the lake. While basking themselves in the sand on the beach, the child attired in Eve's costume, fell asleep. Lying on his back on the hot sand, the mentula assumed the erect state. This phenomenon in a child of six years greatly amused the young woman, and attributing to the child the same emotions as she found in the adult, when the mentula is in the erect position, she bent over and practiced fellatio. The boy began to smile, and the young woman noticing his contented air continued her practice till the child awoke and became aware of the source of his libido.

After this event the child came daily into the woman's room to be amused, and the young woman complied with his wish by all kinds of manipulations with his mentula, because she saw the child greatly enjoyed her practices.

This young woman was happily married to a strong, healthy handsome and kind man with whom she was passionately in love and who spent with her every week-end in the country. Her erotic needs, never exaggerated or very urgent, were thus completely met, by the path of normal marital relations. Still the quiet, modest young woman, out of altruistic motives, assumed the role, otherwise only found in erotic starvation or in nymphomania.

The following case of erotic altruism shows how perverts may be bred by the ignorance of domestics.

A young maid in a well-to-do respectable family, one evening, while entering her bed lets awkwardly something fall which awakens the ten year old boy who was sleeping in an adjoining room. The boy in his fright rushes into the girl's room. To allay his fright the girl innocently takes him into her arms and lets his head nestle close to her bosom. Soon she notices the boy beginning to toy with her mammæ. This childish action greatly amuses the young girl, and noticing the boy's libido from these caresses she lets him have his innocent pleasure, even allowing him to osculate the mam-

mæ. From this moment on she had the fun of receiving the boy's calls every evening. Not to spoil his pleasure she allowed him the most intimate contrectations, stopping short only at cunnilingus. At the same time she herself did not experience the least trace of erotic libido. The only satisfaction she derived from these nightly visits was the satisfaction of affording the boy his innocent enjoyment. These visits went on for quite a while until one evening the boy's mother discovered the boy leaving the girl's room and made her quit her service.

In this case the only proof that it was erotic altruism which induced the girl to allow the boy the intimate contrectations is her own assurance that she herself had no feeling of pleasure in his manoeuvers. On the contrary, she claims that the thing greatly annoyed her because the boy often tried to practice cunnilingus, and she had to struggle to repulse him. Still her own words do not need to be believed. The histories of servant-girls and governesses who seduced their wards for their own sensual pleasures are reported by many sexologists. But these stories were told in the course of the anamnesis, later in life, by the victims themselves. Such seduced boys always retain some anomaly from their early practices, which they relate to their physicians. The girls themselves are, later in life, ashamed of their early doings and will rarely reveal them. This woman, on the other hand, unhesitatingly told herself this story of her early life, without the least embarrassment, showing that she herself remained frigid and hence considered herself innocent of doing wrong. She thought, that she was doing a good thing in letting the boy amuse himself.

The following case shows that sexual altruism will not rarely go to the last consequences of the emotion.

A lady, forty years of age, while taking leave from her friend upon whom she had called, one afternoon, takes also leave from her friend's son, a boy twelve years of age, with an affectionate kiss. The boy returns this caress with a buccal kiss. The strangeness of his behavior awakens the lady's curiosity to know more about the boy and she invites him to call on her when passing her house going home from school.

The boy did not wait long with his call. The following afternoon he came to see his mother's friend. By way of experiment she offered him again her lips, and the lingual kiss made again its appearance. This amused her so that she allowed him to

practice his favorite caress for almost two hours continually. From this day the boy called almost every afternoon regularly. Not to spoil the boy's pleasure of whom she was always very fond, she allowed him not only the kisses but all kinds of intimate caresses. One day when the boy called, she had just left her bath-tub and was lying on her lounge in the same attire as Leda shows herself with the swan on the celebrated picture. In his excitement the boy threw himself upon her. Again the desire to please the boy made her forget her feminine chastity, and she initiated him in the mysteries of the Venus vulgivaga. These practices were repeated several times a week for over a year until one day ejaculation took place. Fearing impregnation, she broke up her relations with the boy by leaving the city.

Now this woman was suffering from idiopathic frigidity. In her erotic activities since her marriage, when twenty years of age, she never experienced the least trace of libido in her marital relations. The same frigidity prevailed in her association with the boy. Hence her relations with him represent a pure case of erotic altruism.

These and similar stories were related in the office-privacy during occasional talks to mothers on the necessity of instructing children in matters sexual. When mention was made of sexual precocity and of some mothers' confusion between ignorance and innocence, these stories were unhesitatingly narrated by way of consent. The women did not consider themselves guilty of any wrong, because they did not experience the least trace of libido at that time. If they did they would have kept their secrets in the innermost recesses of their bosoms.

For the first time the women's attention was called to the fact that instead of having contributed to the well-being of the boys, they actually wronged them. Before the enlightenment they considered themselves benefactors. It is characteristic of the human mind to regard a questionable action sinful, if committed for one's own benefit. If the women had experienced any erotic libido they would have become conscious of their reprehensible acts at that time. But having acted for the well-being of others, they considered their doings more of a virtue than a vice. The general ignorance prevailing about matters sexual was the cause that they were entirely unconscious of the ruinous effects their actions may have had upon the boys. They considered themselves real benefactors. Theirs were true cases of erotic altruism.

The analysis of these cases shows that this altruism stands within the confines of the pathological. The exhibitory antics of the first patient do not constitute a true case of the perversity of exhibitionism. In exhibitionism the goal is the orgastic acme, either the spontaneous or by masturbatic help. In our case no such thought or desire ever existed. Neither can this case, where the male part is entirely ignorant of being observed, be considered an ordinary flirtation. In a flirtation the erotic sense messages are mutual with the conscious or unconscious aim of the gratification of one or both impulses of the sex-instinct. Flirtation is the preliminary skirmishing in the play of the sexes. The tactile erotism observed in the moonlight caresses, is not a preliminary act any longer. It constitutes the act of contrectation, the first and important part of the love drama. The moonlight activity thus pursues its own object, while ordinary flirtation has no end in itself. When the immaterial messages bring on an orgastic attack, we are in the presence of erotic starvation or of hyperesthesia.* An ordinary flirtation should constitute the preliminary for the main activity and not form an object in itself. In our case the patient had no other object than to let the boys enjoy a sight-sensation. Her emotions are more akin to the emotions of the pornographic writer or artist. Where the mercenary motives can be excluded, the pornographic representation of the vita sexualis is in a certain way a kind of erotic altruism, in which the writer finds his satisfaction in arousing the desires and in affording libido to his readers. Our case is not coquetry either. For coquetry is the outcome of a desire to satisfy, on the immaterial plane, the instinct of sex. Our patient had no erotic object in exposing to the masculine gaze those parts of her body which modest women are careful to keep always veiled.

The other cases show their pathological ear-marks not in the pedophilia but in the exaggerated desire of conferring erotic libido upon children. In the anomaly of pedophilia the woman experiences an urgent erotic need to satisfy the instinct of sex by means of

* Those who have the right understanding in such matters may observe a woman dining with one man and at the same time keeping up a flirtation with another man, at a distant table, in the dining room. Suddenly she drops her eyelids, the face becomes flushed, her body languid, and a light tremor goes through her nerves and muscles. The conviction of having aroused the man's desire for her has brought on an orgastic attack. The same thing may happen to the man. But such people are not normal any longer.

the seduction of an innocent child. In our cases the patients' own erotic impulses do not come into consideration at all. They only wish to confer joy on others. The egotistic part is entirely absent. The necessity of the normal female to arrange her bodily charms in the best way to evoke male desire for her has an egotistic basis. This necessity has created in her a certain subconscious feeling that her physical charms ought to be displayed in a way as to be delectable both to behold and to taste. Our patients find their satisfaction in allowing others to taste without participating in the enjoyment. Their emotions therefore deviate from the normal desire to please and to enjoy.

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## SOCIAL ASPECTS OF ASCETICISM.

BY DR. LEOPOLD VON WIESE.

THERE is a notable tendency for modern literature to differentiate between the sex impulse and spiritual love, not only quantitatively but also in its very essence. Thus in the case of Weiniger's friend Emil Lucka, Margarete Susman and others such a differentiation is attempted. That ancient tendency of the mind to view the world and man dualistically is here much in evidence. It is not new and expresses the course which European culture has taken, namely, to establish an impassable chasm between sexual emotions and the so-called spiritual love. There is allowed at most a resigned tolerance to the earth bound ephemeral animal called man while we find a melancholy striving towards the completed ego considered as a disembodied spirit which is contrasted with the gloomy material desires of sexuality. This division appears in the writings of many centuries and is not less marked in the speech of our own time. Since the realm of the erotic is chiefly entrusted to them, women strive continually toward the ennobling of this dominion. But in tradition, ennobling and disembodying are regarded as synonyms so that women gladly defend the rights of the heart as against those of the flesh. Centuries of tradition have accustomed men to praise the spiritual and unworldly as opposed to the materialistic. In general this dualism is accepted as almost axiomatic.

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The conception of love as a great human value will certainly not be denied, I leave that belittling to others if they wish. In what follows we shall be more concerned with defining a conception than in founding one. It is more my purpose to present a problem, formulate a question and to suggest possibilities for its solution. Let it be also remembered that this dualistic conception whether true or false, markedly limits the sexual sphere. It presents a conception of sex which resembles a sturdy tree which has been robbed of its crown—strong tho rather rotten and rifled of its fruit. The practical result is that the inclination to abstinence and strong social activity find support in this. Since if increased love stands in opposition to sexuality then there is all the more reason for mastering the senses and one reaches the conclusion that sexuality is the path downward. Thus the thoughtful and sensitive man can see only shame in sex. Such shame is indeed more or less a display. On the other hand there is another shame, namely, that a cultured man should be able to regard the foundation of all life and of his very existence in so pessimistic and unworthy a manner. This betrayal of life and nature appears to such a man the less tolerable since it oversteps the field of sex and influences the whole view of life. We may call these persons nature lovers or worshippers. Such cannot conceive of any culture or any ethic as having other than natural origins, still less as being in opposition to nature. Since the existence of the individual and therefore of society comes under the rule of pleasure-wishing they can imagine no other force comparable with the sex impulse for completing and refining, for gathering up all the possible sources of beauty. To such an one the attempt at a forcible suppression, at hindering by regarding love as immoral, to regard it in fact as a socially negative value seems absurd. They conceive an unascetic life as wholly compatible with all good, with altruism, humanitarian sentiments and even a god fearing religion. They cannot allow the amalgamation of sex with the concept of immorality. They grant that sex may be evil if it be evilly handled but they do not recognize an unethical criterion in the mere fact of sex. To such asceticism appears not as an ideal and least of all a higher plane toward which we should strive.

Such a point of view recognizes the right and duty of society to regulate the expression of sex in so far as it affects the community relations. As to methods and degree there may be differ-

ences of opinion. But the nature lover will seek to so build up the social structure that it is not contrary to the laws of nature. He will introduce no unnatural regulations which revenge themselves on the social organism. He recognizes such regulations as moderation, physical culture, and eugenics. He would also seek for aesthetic standards and refinement. But always the sex impulse means for the nature lover a positive good, a life force, and a higher value.

However true this view may seem to us nature lovers we realize that it is not so common but what we experience twinges of loneliness at times. Opposed to us stands the everlasting propaganda of asceticism which assumes a halo to belong to asceticism per se. At first it is an absolute prohibition then usually a compromise with exceptions. It may appear as a moral requirement, or the care of children or for combatting immorality but always it plumes itself on its self assumed halo. It is most impressive the way it appears in all religions which rest on a pessimistic view of earthly existence. Thus we see it in Christanity, Buddhism, the Brahman and Jewish cults. It reappears in many ethical and philosophical systems. Even more striking is this desire for asceticism, for purity and sinlessness, in the case of individuals often in striking contrast with the earlier life of the individual. Such seek freedom from desires, lose themselves in abstract contemplation or perhaps in social service. Pretence is of course not always to be excluded. Now the question which I wish to raise is whether this desire for self denial is in the case of healthy men a natural biological development or is it of a sociological nature? That is, is it deducible from transient social conditions? We will leave out of account the obviously pathological cases. It may be that this desire to mortify the flesh arises at certain times in the course of the physiological life as in old age or due to certain changes in the circulation or nutritional disturbance. If it does, then it will outlast our civilization, and reappear in all religions and ethical or social systems. With it it will bring its burden of confusion and sorrow. Or is it perhaps due to ancient social conditions and traditions?

It is not permissible to separate nature and culture arbitrarily, or biology and sociology. Ethical notions which have existed over a length of time will not be without effect on the physical life especially when as in this case, they bear directly on the activities of the individual. On the other hand, conventional restrictions cannot indefinitely stand in opposition to the laws of nature.

As a consequence we find all sorts of compromises. Differences in temperament, in predisposition, nervous sensitiveness, or racial differences, all enter to confuse the problem. Truly the facts of asceticism are strangely compounded. Their elements are in part physiologic-biologic, in part sociologic and ethical. Nevertheless it should be evident that from a natural and hygienic standpoint the facts of asceticism appear as perverse and unhealthy, whereas the sociologic and ethical restriction of the sex impulse to the limits of a pure monogamy is regarded as normal. In this case the social influences seem stronger than the physiological.

Is there then a natural healthy abstinence? As a natural phenomenon the satisfaction of desire follows the course; stimulation, ecstasy and discharge. But the tendency toward abstinence need not be due to satiety. A sound physis implies a flow and ebb with a regular renewal of the desire. To me neither abstinence nor its opposite—an unrestrained licentiousness which many suppose would result were the conventional restraints abrogated—seems to correspond to the natural law of a healthy man. Every psycho-physical analysis of man shows that the sexuality of man penetrates into even the most spiritual phases of the ego. The most spiritual emotion, the most unworldly religious ardor is influenced by the sexuality of the individual. (I do not refer to the fantastic and superficial division of mankind into sadistic and masochistic.) It does not seem probable that the natural impulse of sensation and will drive man to denial and abstinence. Where the will to abstinence appears in healthy men we must look to social conditions for its origin. Such tendencies may have origins outside of the actual milieu of the person and appear as genuine psychic impulses of the individual ego.

I must refer to the biologists and particularly the physicians to answer the question whether there be any physiological need for suppressing sexual desire. The answer is obvious. Where the will to asceticism appears in healthy men the origin must lie in the social order. By asceticism I do not mean merely the abstention from sexual intercourse but that whole conception of sex as evil in itself, as immoral and a defect. We must include also in this conception prudery, cynicism, in fact the whole idea of sex as a negative moral value. Looked at in this way one observes that we live in an eminently ascetic age. The common complaint not to say scolding, about the laxity of morals is not a proof of the absolutely false assertion that immorality has greatly increased.

Rather is it a proof that the ascetic ideal has grown. These ideals led astray rather by fantasy than by experience, react upon a more keenly sensitive conscience than in any previous age. The individual finds himself puzzled in the midst of conflicting impulses and ideals. The novel and the drama present many examples. Schopenhauer's "renunciation of the will to live" and Wagner's Parsifal might be cited. I am not unconscious of the fact that such general judgments concerning the present time are subject to criticism but it may suffice if I have indicated that there is a great deal of asceticism about and that we regard striving towards renunciation as an ideal.

Where then, is the historical origin of this ideal? One can follow it back through the sorrowful centuries to its origin in the primitive ignorance of the race. The earliest religions knew it not, nor did the earliest social codes. Only when the human spirit began to conceive of life after death do we find doubts expressed with regard to sexuality. Primitive priestly influences which have never ceased to act, stand at the beginning of this long melancholy development. (See Edward Carpenter's Intermediate Types among Primitive Folk.—Tr.) These intermediaries between mankind and the next world naturally regarded all things earthly as a hindrance to future bliss. It was also natural that the impulse which bore most directly upon life on earth (and in which the priesthood was deficient—Tr.) seemed their greatest enemy in their struggle for the human soul. Voluptuousness seemed to them the fundamental evil. It would be interesting to trace this attempt to blacken the reputation of Eros through its variations in the early stages of culture and its compromises and later developments until the dualistic conception of man took firm hold upon his heart. Similarly it could be traced not only in religions but also in many philosophic-ethical systems with their contrasts of the things eternal with the tawdry conceptions of the world the flesh and—the woman. In all of them we find the assumption that asceticism is a virtue in itself and without regard to any possible end. And so the conception has developed that there can be no salvation spiritual or temporal but that which is paid for by the mortification of the flesh.

It may be doubted if a mere ideal would be able to enforce this lasting dualism. Rather we may suspect that the organization of the family and state could not have been completed without some

tendency toward asceticism. As I have elsewhere pointed out: the political motives for asceticism can be accounted for by the conditions of primitive culture. Combats arising from jealousy must be avoided and later inheritance had to be definitely established. An orderly social organization seemed irreconcilable with promiscuity. The rise of private property and paternal control as well as the subjugation of woman and their reduction to the role of workers under the patriarchate, all of these forces transformed the ideal of asceticism into a socio-ethical dogma. It was necessary to break the individual will to the needs of the state and family. But in no other matter is man so prone to follow his individual inclination as in the satisfaction of his sexual craving. The ideal of the creed combined with the ideal of the state. To become social came to mean become monogamous and ascetic!

Church, Family and State are the bearers of the ascetic ideal. Since the modern man has had to shape himself more and more to their needs and yet could not entirely cease to be a natural creature he has remained entangled in a mass of contradictions. That may seem a triviality, but other influences are tied up with it. Not merely have we the contradiction of "thou shalt" and "thou wouldst," these forces touch upon the dualism of the will. Were it not that these forces are dependent for their very existence upon a certain tolerance of the sex function the individual would have become extinct long ago. Only to the aged and senile hermit could the idea of loveless and mechanical breeding have appealed as a panacea for all human ills. We could gain a deep insight into the development of humanity if we could follow the variations and compromises between the individual desire and the social compromises and taboos. Merely in order to exist such compromises are recognized as necessary by ascetic creeds as for example in Buddhism. Much too infrequently have the church and state ever paused to consider the bearing of sexuality on the will to live and to work. A twisted, pessimistic, and wholly superficial argumentation is all one finds even in the early writings on the nature of society. Few observed that the power of this impulse which they so feared, furnished the strongest material with which to build. It would almost seem that some demon of perversity had given man a one sided view of sexuality which precluded the possibility of seeing it from any other angle. The old priestly habit of pessimistic speculation about man and his fate was inherited from system to system, "—the imagination of man's heart is evil from

his youth." To-day, when one can but wonder if it is not too late, a few of us have come to realize that everything original, individual and above the mediocre in thought, feeling, and willing, arises from the rythm of the pulse, from the ebb and flow of the primary and secondary sexual expressions. Here lies a new and complex socio-biological task. The blind struggle against sexuality is an act of social self destruction. Even if we put aside the problem of genius (genius is love) an unprejudiced observer would say that one had built the social edifice on a volcano when instead of completing and ennobling this impulse he made its suppression the foundation of his ethics. Whatever our dispute as to the nature of the happiness of the individual it remains true that suitable sexual activity produces a sensation of pleasure while suppression involves irritability. Happy men are useful men, they work gladly and give themselves gladly in the social service. Suppression venges itself on the suppressor. The law of the conservation of energy applies here also. Compel a man to chastity and he remains permanently unchaste. As a clever Frenchman has said: "one has to choose between the chastity of the body and the chastity of the imagination." The celibates present a strangely deformed picture of the sexual relations and it is hard to listen to their scolding preachments without a feeling of depression.

To date the results of the teaching of asceticism as a virtue stand in direct contradiction of the desired end. This not in the superficial sense that the more one is forbidden the more one sins. But rather that the more one strives to live up to the ascetic ideal the more unchaste one becomes in matters not primarily sexual. This occurs primarily in the unholy perversion of truth. I mean that one who looks upon life as a natural phenomenon has nothing to conceal, nothing to apologize for. He has no need of hypocrisy and so develops a sound healthy thought and action. Whereas falsifying the impulse with its consequent perversion of the spirit; the search for substitutes; and the instinctive resentment of that authority which denies what the ego cannot cheerfully accord; these develop in man an unhealthy attitude toward society and life. This attitude may take the form of a fantastic melancholy, a pessimistic renunciation of life, or a crafty hypocrisy. For this reason far-seeing men have striven for a compromise between nature and culture. In general, neither ethical systems nor the law have honestly tried to understand man before they sought to mold him to their uses.

From what has gone before it should be reasonably clear how the desire for asceticism sneaked into the human heart. It is to be understood as a process of adaptation of the psyche to society. In primitive times man was unsocial, selfwilled and governed by his passions. Thus the compulsion which forced him into the social order bit all the more keenly at his spirit. His inner conflict was: Shall I obey or not? Which is the stronger? In passionate tragedy the ego and the social order fought it out. Gradually the spirit yielded and the external force abated. He lost faith in the righteousness of his impulses ad began to doubt whether after all society saturated as it was with the wisdom of all time might not be the bearer of the higher ethos. Yet the pulse beat—no longer so fiercely tho still warm—and fertilized both the imagination and the will. The sex impulse had not died out. But trusting to the higher values of society man found in the suggestions of his blood only a burdensome irritation. He desired peace with his god, his state and his family!

The average modern man has not yet reached a state where one could speak of an inner victory, of a complete socializing of the impulse. Rather he presents a picture of disintegration and uncertainty. He sways between extremes, at times more ascetic at others more sensual. In his views and judgments this fatal uncertainty is again reflected. His own tortured conscience drives him to judge others by a severely ascetic standard. In short, the whole crazy witches-sabbath of our utterances about sex results from this lack of unity of the will.

The future offers three possibilities. First: the distant future may see procreation a wholly loveless and artificial phenomenon and the sex impulse dead. Or secondly: we may admit the fundamental significance and necessity of sex while holding to the conception of it as a negative ethical value. Thirdly: man will recognize the origin of this prejudice and by an about-face rob the ideal of asceticism of its all but universal application.

A race void of the sex impulse is a race lost to beauty. The social principle will apparently have conquered but in a dead world with empty ideals. A world ruled only by hunger and thirst were a mere superfluity which would shame mankind into its grave. The same is true of the second possibility though in a milder degree. In that world we should expect a race innerly unchaste whose idealism would readily take on hysterical forms. A fanatical desire for the next world and a deep pessimism would be the pre-

vailing tone of human thought. In the third instance man would recognize as a social necessity the rooting out of this ancient error. Owing to the laziness of human thinking this is no light task. At the beginning of that epoch which reconciles nature with civilization, there will be not a few who see in this new dawn only the fires of the Last Judgment.

But I deny myself the pleasure of speaking of hopes. Be it sufficient if I have shown that the problem of asceticism needs testing from the biological and sociological points of view.

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Contributed to the American Journal of Urology and Sexology.

## SEXUAL IMPULSE AND REPRODUCTION.

By H. C. Uthoff, Portland, Ore.

STRICTLY speaking there is no connection between the sexual impulse and reproduction. That the two happen to be associated together is the result of the hit or miss method followed by nature and expressed biologically for the sake of convenience in the term "natural selection." Animal experimentation points to the probable truth of the foregoing statement. In a recent interesting little volume entitled "Biology and Social Problems" by George Howard Parker, professor of Zoology in Harvard University, there is cited the following case, tending to show that the sexual impulse and procreative power are only accidentally and not causally related.

The testes of a very young male guinea pig were transplanted by being removed and attached in another region under the abdominal skin. The reproductive glands outwardly made a normal growth and the animal developed the usual secondary sexual characteristics of mature males. It manifested also in due time a normal sexual desire. But when the transplanted testes themselves came to be examined, it was found that the germ cells had failed to develop at all, had in fact quite disappeared. In their place were only interstitial cells, which of course are not concerned with reproduction.

Several inferences may be drawn from this experiment. The first is, of course, that the interstitial cells secret hormones of themselves quite capable of stimulating the development of the secondary sexual characteristics and insuring sexual activity. Evidently the germ cells proper, the egg cells and sperm cells, may

be dispensed with in the process of bringing about the secondary characteristics. This has indeed been observed frequently among domesticated animals when castration has been complete enough to make procreation impossible but has not served to prevent an animal from exhibiting sexual desire or having the usual marks of the fully sexed. In such cases enough of the interstitial cells remain to give out the excitatory fluid resulting in the growth of secondary sexuality and sexual desire.

Again we may infer from the experiment cited that the interstitial cells, either directly or indirectly, give the initial impulse in sexual activity. The germ cells certainly seem unessential for the purpose. This inference would appear perfectly sound. With the germ cells gone, sexual development and activity proceed along the normal course. When, however, both germ cells and interstitial cells in the young are completely removed, as is well known, neither secondary sexual characteristics nor sexual desire appear. As corroborative evidence that germ cells and the sexual impulse have no necessary connection with each other may be cited the fact that perfectly frigid women are quite capable of bearing children and have often done so.

It is assumed of course that if testicular transplantation experiments were carried on with human beings as with guinea pigs the effects would be similar. The assumption would seem a thoroughly safe one, because of the many sexual analogies found among all mammals. In fact, Prof. Parker himself says: "Enough is known concerning operations and transplantations in the human being to justify the conclusion that the results obtained by Steinach on the lower animals will be found to apply with full force to man." (P. 54.)

In the light of the experiment cited we can better understand why there should be an overplus of sexual impulse out of all proportion to the reproductive needs of a species. The explanation lies in this, that the interstitial cells function independently of any teleology involved in the sexual mechanism. They are blindly active without reference to the next thing that is going to happen. The "next thing" in biology has, in fact, never been thought out beforehand. It comes about without any regard for any rule or prearranged scheme of things.

How then does the sexual impulse come to be connected with reproduction so intimately that, until quite recently, it seemed the most natural thing in the world to think that the only reason and

justification for the exercise of sexual power was reproduction? How did we come to regard the sexual instinct and the procreative instinct as practically the same?

The answer to this question can be furnished only by evolutionary science, and is to the effect that the existence of the impulse results in an act that makes procreation possible, even though the reproductive mechanism proper has nothing to do with the origination of the primary impulse. Thus the impulse has great survival value for the species possessing it. Suppose individual animals were to appear as variations in which the interstitial cells were incapable of originating the impulse; or suppose, if capable of originating the impulse, the individual did not happen to be provided with germ cells. It is evident that all such variations inevitably fail to reproduce and can never become established.

Hence, according to natural selection, we shall never find a bi-sexual species in which we have not a sexual impulse and an adequate germ cell development. The mechanics of survival automatically eliminate all deviations from this norm.

It is interesting to speculate what some of our moralists will say when they hear about this conclusion of sexual physiology that sex-desire and reproduction have a merely adventitious relationship to each other. Will the dogmatists change their commandment that sexual intercourse is permissible only for purposes of reproduction or will they continue harping on the same old frayed string of the immorality of desire except when directed toward the creation of another human being?

Most likely most of the male and female Mrs. Grundys will never hear of the physiological conclusions cited, and the few that do will probably not cease to use the old moral formulæ. Such a course is characteristic of that imperviousness to facts which marks all moral dogmatism.

Among thinking people, however, the purely accidental connection between the surplus sexual impulse and the reproductive cells proper will provide a final and incontrovertible argument for intelligent and harmless artificial control of fecundity.

Contributed to the American Journal of Urology and Sexology.

# SALVARSAN, OR, A CASE OF "I TOLD YOU SO."

By Estill D. Holland, M.D., Hot Springs, Ark.

IF it is a pleasure to have your predictions substantiated in *minor* things, it is a great deal more of a pleasure to have them work out in *important* ones.

When salvarsan was first put on the market, in 1911, a great many of us had enough faith in those who vouched for it to give it a trial without any misgivings. Others waited for some one else to give the first dose and others still devoted their time and attention to dire predictions of what would happen to the unfortunate victims who were being given salvarsan. I remember that one physician told me the complete, unabridged history of a patient he once had who had developed arsenic poisoning *five years* after having worked in a paint factory. And one sincere old physician wanted to have the Legislature pass a law making it a crime to give salvarsan in the state.

I was treating a man in the free ward of a hospital who had been confined to the ward for the greater part of three years with syphilis. One of his eyelids was eaten off and the other was starting to ulcerate. He had forty-six ulcers on his body that had to be dressed, and he was constantly getting worse in spite of the best of mercurial and iodide treatment.*

The pre-authentic reports of salvarsan were even more confusing than the later ones and I had determined to only give it to desperate cases until I learned more about it. I told the above patient, Mr. P., about having a new medicine that might do him some good or might kill him. He said he would just as soon be dead as the way he was, so after consulting some eight or ten other physicians, and receiving various advice, I decided to give him an injection of salvarsan, and gave it on the 3rd of January 1911. I consider Mr. P. either the most heroic, or most despondent, patient I have ever had as there were thirty-four physicians in the operating-room during the injection and no man preparing to undergo gastrectomy was ever examined more carefully, painstakingly and *variedly* than Mr. P. He was not only examined as to his present condition but also with the object of being able to tell just how much damage the injection did to his heart, kidneys

* Interstate Medical Journal, March 1911, and American Journal of Dermatology, Vol. XV, No. 12.

and other vital organs, the idea that it would do harm being fully believed by some.

It was to be an intramuscular injection in the buttocks and everything having been gotten ready a blood-pressure outfit was attached to one arm and one of the attending physicians, who happened to be the coroner—some thought fortunately—feeling the pulse at the other wrist, I gave the injection.

Of course we all know now that nothing exciting happened and after waiting a few minutes to see if there was to be an immediate fatal termination, the patient was allowed to return to his room.

Well, to make a long story short, the fatality of a salvarsan injection gradually extended from one minute to three days, the skeptics still predicting the worst but not being so definite as to the time. At the end of three days I gave another dose to a charity patient who also said that he would as soon be dead as the way he was, and continued to give it to desperate cases till I had treated one-hundred-and-fifty "bums," tramps and free ward patients in this way and had given Mr. P. his second dose.

After this, and having had no undesirable results, I started treating our private patients with salvarsan and although I am well over my two-thousandth dose I have never had a bad result.

I think that five years was the furthest any one put the possible degeneration of arsenic poisoning from salvarsan; as the five years is now up and Mr. P. alive and well after four doses, No. 2 the same after three doses and hundreds of others after one, two or three doses, with no bad results, I feel that it is time for the *original believers* to crow.

During the first one or two years after the introduction of salvarsan the journals were full of it—most of the papers being written by those who had given from one to a dozen doses—the opinions expressed being just as positive as were the opinions expressed by those who had given hundreds of doses.

I know one physician whose first salvarsan patient developed an abscess that confined him to bed for several weeks, the patient wanted to sue the physician for malpractice and the physician wanted to convince the patient that the abscess was the result of the medicine and had nothing to do with the administration.

This physician made it a business to collect all the adverse criticisms of salvarsan that he could find in the journals and I have never seen a more complete and convincing lot of evidence

collected, if taken at its face value, than he had accumulated in a few months. Every known ailment that has ever followed in the wake of a syphilitic infection was being layed at the door of salvarsan. The fact that all the complications reported had been reported, time and again, before the days of salvarsan, seemed to have been lost sight of and the rule was to blame the new medicine for every case of blindness, diplopia, vertigo and paralysis following its administration, and to blame syphilis for the same conditions where salvarsan had not been given. The trouble was that it was a time of great interest in Salvarsan and its admirers and critics had the public notice so that a paper on syphilis that didn't either advocate or oppose the new treatment was hardly noticed.

It was nothing unusual to find a detailed account of some patient who had taken one dose of Salvarsan intramuscularly, or subcutaneously, without any other treatment, and who had afterward developed a degeneration of the optic nerve. Such a thing was hardly ever reported as a syphilitic manifestation or relapse but was usually given as the result of the salvarsan.

Everyone seemed to develop his private technique after about the fifth dose he administered and it has always been a wonder to me, and an assurance of the comparative harmlessness of salvarsan, that there were not ten-thousand people killed with it the first year.

Suppose that instead of salvarsan it had been some poisonous drug that was being given in every conceivable manner, and in dosage ranging from one-sixth of a full dose to twice a full dose. The European war would have had nothing on the medical profession as an engine of destruction.

As a matter of fact I watched the reports of casualties from salvarsan very closely for several years and, although there were a great many rumors to be heard, I never found but one that bore the faintest resemblance to a salvarsan fatality and as I consider it a typical case I will give it briefly.

I heard, one afternoon, that a man had died on an operating table while taking salvarsan. The report was, of course, that the medicine had killed him. I tried to find some way to account for it but could not and had about made up my mind that it was a clear case of death, either from the medicine or the intravenous injection of the salt solution, when one day I heard the true report.

It seems that the physician, who had not given but a few

doses, introduced his needle into the vein and was so slow in making his connection with his gravity apparatus that the blood clotted and stopped up the needle. The physician not wishing to take the needle out and re-insert it, compromised by introducing a wire into the external end of the needle and pushing the clot into the patient's circulation.

The report said that the patient died from salvarsan and was true in so far that if he hadn't been taking salvarsan there would have been no needle introduced to clot and no clot to be pushed into the circulation.

It seems a wonder that any medicine having the above conditions to contend with should have ever been able to prove its usefulness and worth.

Heralded as a miracle, as something that would make one of the great scourges of the human race a thing to be laughed at and not feared; denounced from the pulpits as the eliminator of one of the principal causes of human decency, whose removal would loosen passions that only fear had been able to control: advertised as a sure and quick cure; was there ever any other medicine with such a reputation to live down!

I think it would be interesting to read some opinions written after five years trial and I have no hesitancy in saying that my experience with it has been a constant source of gratification, unmarred by any complications. I have seen the field of its rational use extended from the secondary manifestations of syphilis to all the stages of syphilis and all the complications of syphilis, except syphilis of the ear.

I had the pleasure of reporting some of the first cases of nervous syphilis treated with salvarsan and of re-reporting them three years later at Richmond, Va.*

Perhaps the best indication of the esteem in which salvarsan is now held is the clamor that is being raised because we cannot get it and the dire predictions made in regard to patients who can no longer receive it.

Dugan-Stuart Building.

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* Monthly Cyclopedia and Medical Bulletin, February 1912, and The Southern Medical Journal, June 1915.

# EDITORIAL NOTES

## NORMAL VS. ABNORMAL SEXUALITY.

I am much more interested in the fearful heartaches, in the unquenchable longings of normal men and women of all ages than I am in the sufferings of perverts and degenerates. Not that I pity the latter less, but I pity the former more. For we must bear in mind that taken all in all, the perverts, including in this term the homosexuals, sadists, masochists, nymphomaniacs, etc., do not constitute more than five per cent. of the population. The sexually normal constitute ninety-five per cent. And we certainly should devote most of our attention to those who constitute the vast majority than to those who constitute an insignificant and almost negligible minority. We must further bear in mind, that racially the perverts constitute a very undesirable element and it would be best if they could be prevented from procreating. And then again try as we may we cannot work up any genuine sympathy towards a cruel sadist or one who is addicted to bestiality. The best thing for such people would be to take a dose of HCN. That's what I did advise one to do, quite frankly.

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## THE TASK OF SEXOLOGY.

I confess that the normal healthy man and woman, who suffer agonies and whose life blood drips slowly away because their physical and *spiritual* longings find no outlet and no satisfaction, touch me and interest me much more deeply than do the perverts.

In my opinion the task of Sexology for many years to come will consist in a searching study of the elements of the normal manifestations of sex, both physical and spiritual—the latter being the more important, in an analysis of that feeling which has so far defied all analysis, the feeling which is as much of a mystery now as it was three thousand years ago, nay is much more of a mystery, because with the growing complexity of human spirituality and human culture, the feeling becomes much finer, much more delicate, much more complex, the feeling which for the lack of a better word we call—Love. The abnormal manifestations of sex must not be neglected—but they must be given a subordinate place.

## SEXOLOGY VS. OBSCENITY.

A physician sent an article to the American Journal of Urology and Sexology, which I promptly returned. I told him that the postal authorities would not stand for such stuff, but even if they did I would not think of publishing it, because I considered it vulgar, filthy, and what is most important, because I considered it as having no raison d'être. He wrote back saying that he was surprised and pained to discover that with all my broad-mindedness and radicalism I was a narrow-minded puritan. I did not reply, but I will take this occasion to say that if aversion to coarse vulgarity and purposeless obscenity constitutes puritanism, then I *am* a puritan. Sexology is not synonymous with scatology. There is nothing that I consider sacred, taboo, beyond the pale of discussion, but there must be a purpose behind it; you must show me that the purpose is the improvement of human conditions, the increase of the sum-total of human happiness.

The motto that I adopted ten years ago: no book—and no article—has a right to exist that has not for its purpose the betterment of mankind, by affording either useful instruction or healthful recreation, is still my motto to-day. And I want everybody to know it. In fifteen years of writing I have not been guilty of one smutty or obscene expression. One can write and speak with the utmost freedom, using unvarnished expressions, without being obscene. And the doctor who aspires to the title of sexologist is in great error if he thinks that sexology consists exclusively in reporting cases (many half a century old and most of them apocryphal) of bestiality, tribadism, coprolagnia, nymphomania and sadistic murders. This is the nauseating fringe of sexology, but it is not sexology.

And in conclusion one more word: The deepest-going sexologist may be and often is a man of pure thoughts and pure actions (using the word both in its conventional and its sublime sense); the superficial sexologist is generally a man who likes to wallow in filth. The Editor flatters himself with the thought that he belongs to the former group.

# ABSTRACTS

## FRIENDSHIP AND SEXUALITY.

In an address as chairman Dr. Placzek (Z. *Sex.* II, 265, '15) undertakes to rescue the emotion of friendship from the radical Freudians. He very properly asserts that the poets and other emotionalists need not be convicted of homosexual practices merely on their writings. He reviews the literature of friendship, especially of the Werther-Zeit without however finding any definite criteria for distinguishing between those friendships where homosexuality is well established and those where we may assume that the relation was physically platonic. Numerous citations, many untranslatable, are offered from the autograph albums, guest-books, and diaries of earlier times. In the discussion which followed Bloch pointed out that homosexual nuances are present in the emotions of men otherwise normal, but in rebuttal Placzek insisted that we must not see sexuality in all things. To the reviewer it seems wiser to judge a tree by its fruits rather than by the manure required to grow them. Assuredly our emotions draw nourishment from some very old soil.

E. S. S.

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## FLIES AS SEXUAL OBJECTS.

Dr. W. Stekel (Z. *Sex.* II, 289, '15) relates three cases in which flies were used as adjuncts for onanistic performances. In one case a definite sadistic element was present. The cases were not fully investigated. The stimulating effect of certain small dung-flies common about rural out-houses has been observed among erotic school boys so that Stekel's cases are not as unusual as they might otherwise seem.

E. S. S.

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## WHEN IS COITUS MOST LIKELY TO RESULT IN CONCEPTION.

The war with the occasional furloughs has furnished opportunity for some data on this ancient question. Examining 100

cases at his clinic Dr. Siegel (*D. Med. Woch.* p. 1251, 1915) found that in every case conception occurred in the first twenty-one days following menstruation. It was most frequent in the first six days, retained a moderately even rate until the twelfth or thirteenth, then fell rapidly to the twenty-first after which no conceptions occurred. Neither did it occur in those cases where the husband returned home a few days before menstruation and left before it had passed. The time between menses may be divided into four periods: The post menstrual averaging five days; The intermenstrual, thirteen days; The premenstrual, six days; and the menstrual about four days. The *post-menstrual is most favorable* for conception. The sterility of the premenstrual period may be caused by the closure of the tubes through hyperemia. The sperm requires from twenty-four to thirty-six hours to traverse the genital mucosa so that amphimixis occurs about two days after coitus. With that in view the maximum rate of conceptions is moderately synchronous with the time of bursting of the follicle.

E. S. S.

## BE CAREFUL HOW YOU DREAM OR POETIZE.

H. Lilienfein (*Die Grenzboten*, Feb. 18, 1914) protests against the psycho-vivisection which the Freudians bestow upon the works of the poets. He terms this a sexual inquisition and desires them to desist.

E. S. S.

## EROTIC HALLUCINATIONS FOLLOWING LOCAL ANESTHESIA.

In a review Bloch (Z. Sex. II, 294, '15) cites cases and advises that even local anesthesia be always carried out in the presence of witnesses and that patients should not be left alone until the effect has entirely worn off.

E. S. S.

## THE PREVALENCE OF SYPHILIS IN THE ARMY.

Capt. Edward B. Vedder (Bull. No. 8. Surgeon General's Office) has made a survey of the army using the Wassermann test in conjunction with clinical data and sick reports when these were available. The Wassermann is about 84 per cent. specific, counting plus and double plus reactions in cases of known syphilis so that the author has been amply conservative in counting only

the double plus reaction as undoubtedly syphilitic. Of 1049 cases suffering from diseases other than syphilis only 0.4 per cent. returned a double plus so that by working on groups of 1000 men the author is able to get very reliable statistics as to the degree of syphilization of different groups. To be on the safe side these plus reactions have not been classed as undoubtedly syphilitic but have been included in *estimating* the *probable* syphilitics. The plus-minus was not counted since about ten per cent. of non-syphilitics give it.

In compiling the data, the known syphilitics added to the double plus reactions give the undoubtedly syphilitic. By adding to this the plus reactions we obtain the figure for the estimated *probable* syphilitics. Passing now to the results of the survey we may mention the following:

Accepted recruits, that means men who have passed two physical examinations. Of these 7.75 per cent. gave a double plus, while 9.02 per cent. gave a plus. The figures are sensibly identical whether the men examined came from a post near a large city or from one drawing more upon the rural population. There is a probable syphilization of 16.7 per cent. among those who are accepted. According to occupations, about 27 per cent. are laborers, 15 per cent. farmers, and the remaining 58 per cent. are clerks, mechanics, in fact, our whole middle class tradespeople.

Eighty per cent. of those who apply for enlistment are rejected at the first examination and 14 per cent. of those accepted on the first test fail on the second. Of this 14 per cent. 9 per cent. are rejected for venereal disease. If we assume that gonorrhea is about four times as common as syphilis and that the percentage of syphilitics is the same in those rejected as among those accepted then 2.3 per cent. of the first rejections were for syphilis. It seems reasonably certain therefore, that among the young men who apply for enlistment about 20 per cent. are syphilitic. That means for the civil population of this class about one man in five.

Among West Point cadets, 2.57 per cent. gave the double plus and 2.89 per cent. one plus. That implies about 5 per cent. for students of similar classes.

In the regular army 3.44 per cent. are known syphilitics, 4.77 per cent. gave a double plus, 7.87 per cent. one plus. The estimated probable syphilitics is therefore 16.08 per cent. Nine per cent. develop syphilis in the first year's service and the majority of these were evidently infected at the time of enlistment. Since

the probable cases among recruits amounts to 16.77 per cent. and these are picked men who undoubtedly suffer less than their fellow civilians, the army shows less syphilis than the applicants for enlistment. Very truly the writer says that the reason the finger of scorn is pointed at the army is that the army is the only place where the amount is known.

Among colored troops the estimated percentage rises to 36, but men with less than one year's service yield 34 per cent. so that this larger figure is due to a larger percentage among the civilians from which these troops are recruited. The highest figure is found among the enlisted men in Porto Rico where the estimated number is 55.9 per cent. with an undoubted percentage of 42.37.

While the groups were small, the relation between syphilis and tuberculosis was investigated with the result that among the tuberculous the percentage of syphilitics was twice that in the army and it is suggested that in treating tuberculosis it is wise to look also for syphilitic infection. This conclusion is not based on the Wassermann alone. Of the tuberculous, 7.56 per cent. were known luetics, while the known syphilitics in the army is only 3.44 per cent.

Among others the following conclusions are of interest here:

1. A very large number of accepted recruits are probably syphilitic, 16.77 per cent.

2. Since only 3.44 per cent of white soldiers appear so on the sick report it follows that most of the cases are not diagnosed.

3. From 2 to 5 per cent. of the commissioned personnel are already infected when they enter the service.

4. The percentage of syphilitics among white enlisted men is slightly lower than among the accepted recruits.

5. Since there are only about 3 per cent. of fresh infections annually it follows that syphilitics are in some way leaving the army faster than they are entering.

6. About 13 per cent. of insanity among soldiers is directly due to syphilis.

7. The percentage of syphilitics in the army is less than among similar men in civil life.

As to the civil population the author says:

1. We may estimate that about 20 per cent. of the young adult male population from which the army is recruited is syphilitic.

2. We may estimate that 5 per cent. of the young men in our colleges are syphilitic.

3. This study confirms observations that have already been

published indicating that syphilis is so prevalent among negroes that it is possibly the greatest single factor in the production of disability and high mortality rates among the race.

4. The high percentage among Porto Ricans indicates that syphilis is one of the important causes of disability among the native Porto Ricans.

5. Since syphilitic infection is so common, is so productive of disability, and so far has entirely evaded sanitary control, it is believed that syphilis is a greater menace to the public health than any other single infectious disease, not even excepting tuberculosis.

This bulletin is a presentation of the results of some 10,000 Wassermanns and the work throughout is marked by sound critical judgment and a most careful checking of sources of error. On the whole it may be said to be an admirable if not particularly cheering piece of research.

E. S. S.

# Letters to the Editor

## SEXUAL ABSTINENCE; LETTER FROM A PENITENTIARY INMATE.

In my present situation I am particularly interested in the articles on abstinence (such a one as appeared in the October issue of The Journal of Sexology). I have been enjoying the enforced hospitality of our mutual Uncle Samuel for over six years now, and though I am in perfect health and vigorous I managed to get along without having recourse to the usual prison substitutes, with which, by the way, this place abounds. During all the time here, I have been sick but once, about three years ago, when we had a little epidemic of diphtheria. A little shot of Mulford's and two days in bed put me on my feet. I am 5 ft. 10 and weigh 180 lbs., always was healthy, never drank whiskey and though I was ever an ardent worshipper at the shrine of Venus, I never, mirabile dictu, never contracted any venereal disease. The first year I was here was rather hard for me, and I had frequent recourse to anaphrodisiacs, but after the few first stormy months, I settled down and now, but for an occasional emission, I am not troubled. I do not experience any deleterious mental effects, such as the writer in the Journal describes, from my enforced abstinence. I always had a

particular predilection for women with pretty, well-shaped feet and abundant mammæ (foot and mammæ fetichist, I think, Krafft-Ebing calls us) and though perfectly potent with any woman (I have never experienced any inhibition of libido) those with the two characteristics mentioned seemed to have an increasing effect on my pleasure. On several occasions here, when I came in contact with visitors particularly gifted in that respect, I experienced a powerful erection and occasionally in the summer, when some particularly large busted female lingers in my vicinity, an ejaculation. I do not permit my mind to dwell on the images of my particular ideals and to date I have not experienced any of the ill effects of the repression.

My work here is not hard, I am orderly in chapel and stage manager and play piano for our shows and that is about the extent of my "hard labor." I have my own system of physical culture and that takes up my surplus energy and that I think has kept me in the splendid health I have always enjoyed and away from the doctor, who by the way, has treated me with the greatest consideration. He permitted me the use of his books and that act alone endeared him to me as much as his many other kindnesses.

Now I wrote this letter merely to show you that it is possible, at least in my case, to live in total abstinence, even after one has tasted the joys as much as I have.

Our management is rather liberal and goes on the principle that anything that can be sent thru the mails can be received by the prisoners, and in that respect we are far ahead of the other prisons, which won't even permit daily papers to their inmates. If you have any French or German exchanges, particularly with articles by Freud, Moll, Hirschfeld, Bloch or others, I would be glad to get them when you have no further use for them, I can even do fairly well with Latin, and one or two other languages.

Gratefully yours,

——*Penitentiary.* ——— ——— ———.

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## SEX FREEDOM.

February 14, 1916.

My dear Dr. Robinson:—The papers now have some articles about the suicide of a Miss Lambert, out West. She was in a delicate condition, and took her own life when her lover refused to marry her. He is now in jail, with the circumstances of his

part in her death yet to be proved. Conventional sex reactionaries will be rubbing their hands with glee, and regretting only that a similar fate cannot overtake all who have sexual intercourse outside the marriage bond. A very little contraceptive knowledge and the expenditure of less than a dollar, which could have been made so that nobody would suspect the intent or the purpose, would have prevented all trouble. But the real trouble and the proper remedy go back much further and deeper.

The state should support all women and children, and the law should not characterize any children as illegitimate or bastards, even if private society rules do so. A so-called bastard makes social disorder, the same as an auto going up the left side of a crowded street, but when society gets on a proper basis, and all well-born children will be welcomed, and the rights of all to sex happiness are recognized and admitted, and the law does not concern itself with one's sex activity any more than it does or should with what he does with his arms (which is only insofar as tangible harm results to somebody) there will be no demand for the impossible monogamy and conventionality now attempted, which always has been and always will be futile. The law cannot give or restore social position, no matter how senseless the social arbiters may decree. But at least it can refuse to aid them.

Miss Lambert and her child, had she lived and it been born, should have been welcomed and supported at public expense until it, if a male, should be able to take a man's part in the co-operative commonwealth.

The commencement or the discontinuance of sex association should be ignored by law unless somebody makes a claim for redress or protection, and can show that a definite wrong has been suffered.

And when society gets right, that could not come except through the use of physical force, infection with disease, or brazen public indecency such as now would be condemned between a husband and his lawful wife. Free women from sex slavery, and give all the legal right to bestow or refuse their persons as they may see fit. What fools people are. The idea of trying to establish an artificial sex code, when nature has done it all for us, with wisdom far above all human knowledge present, past and future, in the instincts of the individuals concerned.

Sincerely yours,

New York City. S. R. S.

Dear Dr. Robinson:

. . . .I am 42 years old and have been married for 19 years. My health has always been good, am over 6 ft. in height and weigh 204 pounds. I was brought up on a farm until about 13 years old, when I was sent to school in a city. I had been told nothing about sexual matters up to this time, and shortly afterwards was initiated into the masturbating act by school companions and practiced the act moderately until I married, and very occasionally since. Never indulged in coition either ante or extra maritally, not from any moral sense, but simply from lack of opportunity and fear of venereal infection. Altho I indulged in masturbation for so long, I do not find that my sexual power has been in any way impaired, and that I can satisfy my wife perfectly. However everyone might not escape so easily thru sexual ignorance. Boys should be taught about their sexual powers at the proper time, and not leave it, as was done in my case, to hap-hazard. I also think it would be better to teach a boy when he reached the age of discretion the use of prophylactics and let him get his sexual satisfaction in the natural way. This would be better than masturbation, and the young man would not then enter into the marriage relation in total ignorance of its consummation. Such is the opinion of a layman.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. A.

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Dr. W. L. Kendall asks the question, "What are we doing and what should we do for the feeble-minded?"

The best thing we can do for the feeble-minded is to prevent them from being born, the next best thing is to prevent them from procreating, and for this purpose either colonization or sterilization becomes necessary.

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The friend of humanity may with some confidence anticipate a gradual diminution in the prevalence of venereal diseases, and may hope for their complete extinction in a not too distant future. All that is requisite for the attainment of this end is that those engaged in the study and practice of general hygiene, and those concerned in the safeguarding of public morality, should not weary in their efforts; and that scientific research should pursue its aims firmly and clearly, uninfluenced by the tyranny of custom, and independent of prejudice.—K. F. Marx.